

# Missouri River

## RECOVERY PROGRAM

2008-10

### **MRRIC Update**

The inaugural meeting of the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) was held on Sept. 29 through Oct. 1 in St. Louis, Missouri. The MRRIC is made up of representatives of basin Tribes, States and stakeholders as well as Federal agencies with responsibilities that affect the river. While Tribes, States and Feds appointed their representatives, the stakeholder representatives were selected through an application process. Twenty-eight stakeholder reps were selected to represent 16 basin interest categories. Those applying for a stakeholder position were required to submit an application and letters of recommendation to demonstrate their qualifications.

Participation in the first meeting of the committee far exceeded expectations. More than 50 members attended, including representatives from all eight basin States and five basin Tribes. All 28 stakeholder positions were represented, as well as 10 different Federal agencies. Even with not being able to use Federal funding to reimburse travel expenses to members - prohibited by the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, Section 5018 (WRDA 2007) - there was a high attendance at the two-and-a-half-day meeting, which is a strong indication of the high degree of interest in Missouri River recovery issues in the basin.

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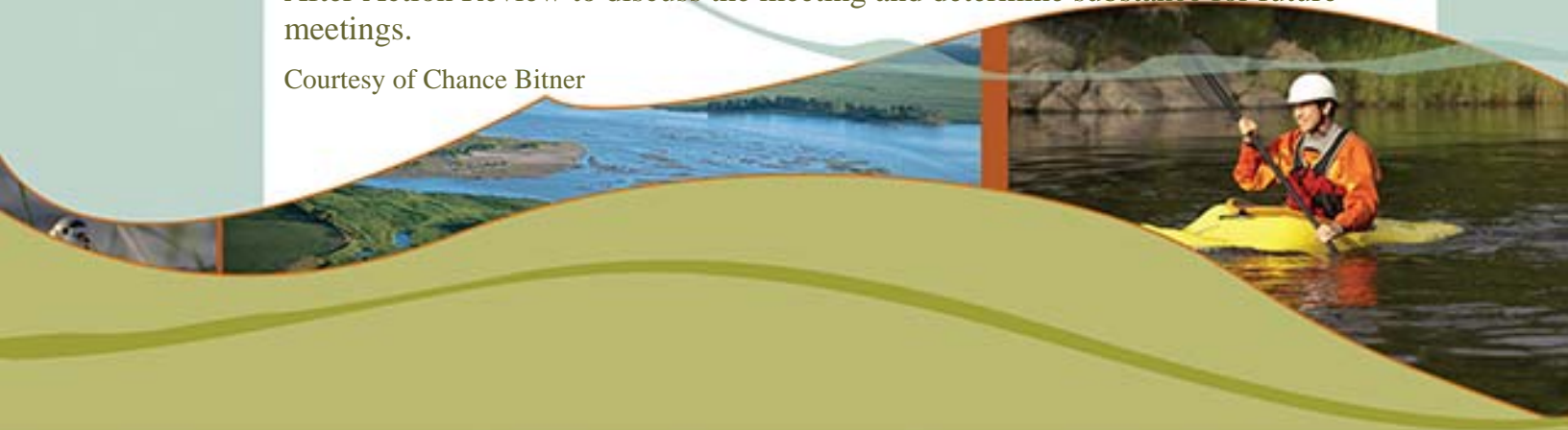
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### **NAS Sedimentation Meeting**

The first sedimentation meeting of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was held on Oct. 2 in St Louis, Missouri, following the MRRIC meeting. The meeting was well attended, especially by Federal employees (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Geological Survey) and MRRIC members.

Presentations were given by the Corps, USGS and USFWS to the committee, as well as from Kristen Perry, and several members of the public, including Joe Gibbs, Jason Skold of The Nature Conservancy, Bill Beacom, a representative of the Missouri River Navigation Caucus, and Bob Perry. The team intends to hold an After Action Review to discuss the meeting and determine substance for future meetings.

Courtesy of Chance Bitner



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### **Real Estate**

Approximately 330 acres at Rush Bottom in Missouri (River Mile (RM) 500) were acquired in September.

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### **Construction Contracts Awarded**

- Langdon Bend Wetland Restoration Project Options in Nebraska - \$871,345
- Middle Decatur Bend in Iowa - \$1,386,000
- Plattsmouth Bend Backwater Phase II in Nebraska - \$1,305,600
- South River Structure Modifications (in various locations on the Missouri River south of Omaha) - \$1,511,630
- Columbia Bottom in Missouri (RM 0) repair contract - \$350,000

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### **Missouri River Relief Cleanup**

Steve Fischer participated in the Missouri River Relief effort on Saturday, Oct. 4. The group used the Corps' Missouri River boat to help transport approximately 375 people to collect trash between river miles 345 and 355. Specifics on the actual "haul" are not available, but the boat brought back 11 55-gallon drums, two refrigerators, one washing machine, five traffic barrels, seven tires, and more than 30 bags of junk. It was a great opportunity to talk about the river and Corps projects with local citizens. In the future, Missouri River Relief is hoping to add future cleanup events further up the river.

Courtesy of Steve Fischer

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### **Upcoming AOP Meetings**

Missouri River Basin Water Management has developed the Draft 2008-2009 Annual Operating Plan (AOP) for the Missouri River mainstem reservoir system. It shows continued drought conservation, resulting in reduced navigation support, reduced hydropower generation, lower than desired reservoir levels and releases (but better than recent years), and a bimodal spring pulse from Gavins Point Dam. The draft is available at the following website:

<http://www.nwd-mr.usace.army.mil/rcc/aop.html>

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### **Correction to September Bulletin: Tern and Plover Report**

There is a correction to last month's incidental take losses from Corps operations for the 2008 nesting season. A total of 256 piping plover eggs from 75 nests, and six piping plover chicks were lost for an incidental take of 262.

Courtesy of Greg Pavelka

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### **Upcoming AOP Meetings—*Continued from Page 2***

The normal series of public meetings have been scheduled for the week of Oct. 13:

- 14 October (Tue), 7:00-8:00 p.m., Nebraska City, Nebraska, at the Lewis & Clark Center
- 15 October (Wed), 11:00 a.m. – noon, Kansas City, Missouri, at the Embassy Suites Airport
- 15 October (Wed), 7:00-8:00 p.m., Jefferson City, Missouri, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel
- 16 October (Thu), noon – 1:00 p.m., Fort Peck, Montana, at the Fort Peck Interpretive Center
- 16 October (Thu), 7:00-8:00 p.m., Bismarck, North Dakota, at the Radisson Hotel
- 17 October (Fri), 11:00 a.m. – noon, Pierre, South Dakota, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel

Information is courtesy of Jody Farhat

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### **MRRIC Update—*Continued from Page 1***

The initial meeting focused primarily on developing operating procedures for the committee. An interim committee chairman was selected by consensus vote of the members. Mr. Randy Asbury, At-Large representative from Higbee, Missouri, will act as interim chairman until a chairman is selected to serve. The committee formed sub-groups to pursue: recommendations on nominees for chairman, grants for travel expense reimbursement, technological applications to aid communication, drafting of proposed operating procedures, and preparation of the agenda for the next meeting.

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### **MRRIC Update—Continued from Page 3**

Information-sharing is and will be a significant component of the MRRIC's agenda. The committee heard information on the Missouri River Recovery Program, the Ecosystem Restoration Plan, and pallid sturgeon recovery efforts at this first meeting. A guest speaker, Mr. Jimmy Bullock, shared his experiences in multi-stakeholder collaboration in black bear conservation with the committee. A list of information topics was developed by the Federal Agencies and provided to the group for possible presentation ideas for subsequent meetings.

In addition to information-sharing, WRDA 2007 tasks the MRRIC with providing input to and recommendations on recovery activities in the basin and the study that will result in the Ecosystem Restoration Plan. Committee members are very eager to influence decision-making and are interested in the specific activities, processes and time-frames for their input.

The meeting was facilitated by the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution. They will continue to provide facilitation support until the committee is able to select a contracted facilitation team, through the U.S. Institute's roster.

The Missouri River Natural Resources Committee (MRNRC), made up of natural resource scientists from the basin States, funded a reception for the MRRIC. The MRRIC members greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet and mingle in a less-formal setting.

The committee decided to hold its next meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, on Dec. 16 through 18. The Corps is working with the U.S. Institute to determine a venue. All meetings are open to the public.

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